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THE PRINCIPLES  
OF  
GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE

ELUCIDATED  
BY QUESTION AND ANSWER.

BY  
MATTHEW BLOXAM.



Saxon Doorway, Brixworth Church, Northamptonshire.

LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR  
WHITTAKER, TREACHER, AND CO.  
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## PREFACE.

AN attempt has been made to present in the following pages a concise view of the principal distinctions of the different styles or orders of that kind of architecture generally termed "*Gothic*;" and, by pointing out the details or parts of each style in a catechetical way, to impress such distinctions on the memory in a more forcible manner than could otherwise have been done. For this purpose, such general rules only are given as may be easily understood and practically applied.

RUGBY, WARWICKSHIRE,

May, 1829.





## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE little information contained in this Work, will clearly show, that it is by no means intended as a substitute for any other, but as a mere introductory outline to the Study of Gothic Architecture. It may be followed up by the perusal of *Rickman's* excellent *Treatise*, a Work which contains perhaps more practical information than any other on this subject, and from which, together with the Works of Bentham, Brewer, Buckler, Caster, Dallaway, Grose, Fosbrooke, Kendall, Milner, Neale, Storer, Wharton, and others, this concise view has been principally compiled.





Norman Door Way.—Chap. III.

## INTRODUCTION.

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### ON THE ORIGIN, PROGRESS, AND DECLINE, OF GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE IN ENGLAND.

It was in the fifth century that Rome, oppressed on every side by enemies, and distracted with the vastness of her conquests, which she was no longer able to maintain, recalled her legions from Britain, the southern parts of which they had possessed for above the space of four hundred years. During this period they had not only instructed the natives in the arts of civilization, but also with their

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aid, as we learn from Tacitus, erected temples and public edifices, though much inferior to those at Rome, in their municipal towns and cities. The Romanized Britons, thus taught to revere the deities of Rome, still continued to frequent the altars and temples which their conquerors had left behind ; but being without protection, and having, during their subjection to the Romans, lost their ancient valour and love of liberty, they in a short time fell a prey to the Northern barbarians ; and having in their extremity called over the Saxons to assist them, the latter perceiving their defenceless condition, turned round upon them and made an easy conquest of this country ; and it can hardly be doubted but that the new comers continued to use the ancient Roman temples then existing, for their own idolatrous worship.

Towards the end of the sixth century, when Christianity was propagated in this country by Augustin and other zealous monks, he was advised by Gregory, the head of the Papal church, not to suffer the Heathen temples to be destroyed, but only the idols found therein. These, built originally by the Romans, or others

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similar to them by the Saxons, may reasonably be supposed to have been the first Christian churches in this country.

The Roman style of architecture in buildings of magnitude and beauty, frequently consisted of massive square piers, from the imposts of which sprung arches of a semicircular form. Pillars of the different orders, with their capitals, were also used to adorn the porticos of their most magnificent structures; and in imitation of these, though in a rude way, and with a diversity of design and ornament, the Saxon and Norman buildings of any magnitude were partly composed of square piers or massive round columns, supporting semicircular arches. We also frequently find among the Saxon and Norman capitals, rude imitations of the Ionic, Corinthian, and Doric orders. With respect to the semicircular arches being constructed upon round columns instead of upon square piers, which was almost universally the Roman method, the church of St. Paul's at Rome, built by Constantine, and within the last few years destroyed accidentally by fire, is the earliest example; and that method of building was pro-

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bably imitated in the most ancient churches throughout Christendom.

Independent also of examples, afforded by the temples and public buildings then remaining in Britain, the Anglo-Saxons possessed other opportunities of imitating the Romans in the science of architecture, inasmuch as they were directed and assisted by those missionaries from Rome, who propagated Christianity amongst them.

The semicircular arch being the grand characteristic of both the Saxon and Norman styles, and the latter having succeeded the former by slow and imperceptible degrees, and resembling it in many respects, it is difficult to draw a line of distinction between them, unless it be that the Saxon churches approximated more to the debased Roman style of building than the Norman, which latter were generally much larger and loftier, frequently rising in cathedral and conventual churches to the height of three tiers or rows of arches one above another, which were often ornamented with zigzag and other mouldings. Many writers have, how-

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ever, caused much confusion in applying the term "*Saxon*" to all churches and other edifices contradistinguished from the pointed style by circular-headed doorways, windows, and arches. But we have, in fact, comparatively few churches existing which we may reasonably presume or really know to have been erected in an Anglo-Saxon age ; while we have positive testimony that many cathedral and other churches constructed in this manner, have been built since the Norman invasion.

In the reign of Stephen, and down to the beginning of the reign of Henry the Third, a change took place in the manner of building. The pointed style was now gradually introduced, though by no means advanced to perfection : many instances occur where it is mixed with the Norman style, and from such intermixture it may be designated *The Semi or Mixed Norman*.

When the original Norman style of building was first broken through, by the introduction of the pointed arch, the facing of it, or architrave, was often ornamented with the zigzag and other

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mouldings, in the same manner as the Norman circular arches : it also rested on round massive piers, and still retained many other features of Norman architecture.

But the circular mode of building, with massive pillars and thick walls, does not appear to have been entirely laid aside until the reign of Henry the Third, when the pointed arch and slender pillars, with walls strengthened with buttresses, were universally substituted in their stead. The windows of this style were generally long, narrow, and lancet shaped ;—the piers of large edifices consisted of a shaft, with smaller detached pillars round it, connected together under one capital ;—the zigzag and other Norman mouldings were also now entirely discontinued. These are the greatest distinctions of this style, which is usually called *The Early English*. Spires were also now first introduced.

In the latter part of the reign of Edward the First a gradual change again began to take place. The cluster of pillars, instead of being detached, were joined together ; the windows were greatly enlarged, and divided into many

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lights, by mullions running into various ramifications above, and dividing the heads into numerous compartments; the tracery of the whole of which was extremely elegant and beautiful. This style flourished during the reigns of Edward the Second and Edward the Third, in the latter of which it attained a degree of perfection unequalled by preceding or subsequent ages, and is designated *The Decorated English*.

In the reign of Richard the Second another change began to take effect—the rise of the arches became gradually much flatter than before, and in general were formed from four centres or points, two in or near the spring of the arch, and two at a distance from and below it; the mullions of the windows running in perpendicular lines up to the heads, form a most complete distinction from the style of the earlier periods;—the windows are also often less pointed, more open, and much larger: and from the pannelling, which was almost universal, as well as from the mullions of the windows running straight up, instead of branching off into different figures and ramifications, which

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was previously the case, this style has acquired by some the appellation of *The Perpendicular*, though by others, from the profusion, multiplicity, and minuteness of its ornaments, it is better known as *The Florid*.

This style prevailed till the Reformation, at which period no country could vie with our own in the number and beauty of religious edifices, which were erected in all the variety of styles that had prevailed for many preceding ages. Next to the magnificent cathedrals, the venerable monasteries, which had been founded and sumptuously endowed in every part of the kingdom, might most justly claim the pre-eminence ; and many of the churches belonging to them were almost unequalled for their grandeur and architectural elegance of design.

Nothing could have been more injurious, or tend so much to involve and hasten the decline and fall of our national architecture, as the suppression of the monasteries. The churches belonging to them, which had in many instances been built by the monks, and the charges of erecting and repairing which in the most costly

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manner had been defrayed out of their immense revenues, were now repaired, when fallen to decay, by individuals who were totally unable to expend sufficient money upon them, so as to compete with the grandeur or elegance of the former munificent benefactors and patrons.

Hence many of our country churches, which have either been entirely rebuilt or in a great measure repaired since the Reformation, exhibit the marks of the style justly denominated *Debased*, to distinguish it from the former purer styles. Square-headed windows, with perpendicular mullions, form the predominating features in ecclesiastical buildings of this style; and in the reign of Charles the First an indiscriminate mixture of Debased Gothic and Roman architecture prevailing, we lose sight of every true character of our ancient ecclesiastical architecture.





## CHAPTER I.

### DEFINITION OF GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE; ITS ORIGIN, AND THE DIVISION OF IT INTO STYLES OR ORDERS.

**Q. WHAT is Gothic Architecture?**

**A.** The peculiar modes or styles in which most of our ecclesiastical edifices have been built, since the establishment of Christianity in this country.

**Q. Why was it thus designated?**

**A.** The appellation of "Gothic" is said to have been given to this kind of architecture by Sir Christopher Wren, as a term of contempt, it being considered by him much inferior to the purer orders of Grecian and Roman architecture, though it was not in reality established as a mode till some ages after the extinction of the Goths, as a nation, in Europe.

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**Q.** Whence was this kind of architecture originally derived?

**A.** From the Romans, who, on quitting this country in the fifth century, left many of their temples and other great buildings remaining; and in rude imitation of these Pagan temples our ancient churches were constructed.

**Q.** Have we any remains of Roman buildings now existing in Britain?

**A.** Yes, several; among which may be enumerated the curious portion of a Roman temple near the church of St. Nicholas at Leicester, a Roman gateway at Lincoln, and Roman walls at Silchester, Caer Seiont, Wroxeter, and other places: numerous foundations and remains of villas, baths, and other buildings, have also been discovered in different parts of this country.

**Q.** Do any of our churches in their construction bear a resemblance to Roman buildings?

**A.** Several old churches, built near or on the site of stations formerly occupied by the Ro-

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mans, have courses of stones, or what are usually denominated Roman bricks or tiles, inserted in their walls diagonally, or in herring-bone fashion, which also was the case in Roman works ; and some churches have semicircular arches, constructed of the same materials, and springing from square piers. In this manner the church of Brixworth, in the county of Northampton, is built, and exhibits perhaps one of the earliest specimens now remaining of debased Roman or Saxon architecture. We may also perceive in the church of St. Nicholas, at Leicester, which appears to have been erected from the ruins of some Roman building, evident marks of great antiquity.

**Q.** Into how many different styles, or orders, may Gothic or English ecclesiastical architecture be divided ?

**A.** No specific regulation has been adopted with regard to the denomination or division of the different styles ; but they may be divided into six, which, together with the periods in which they flourished, are defined as follows :

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NAMES OF THE DIFFERENT STYLES.	PERIODS DURING WHICH THEY FLOURISHED.
Saxon and Norman, ~~~~~	From the establishment of Christianity in the sixth century to about 1135.
Semi Norman, ~~~~~	From about 1135 to about 1220.
Early English, ~~~~~	From about 1220 to about 1300.
Decorated English, ~~~~~	From about 1300 to about 1380.
Floral, or Perpendicular, ~~~~~	From about 1380 to about 1509.
Debased English, ~~~~~	From about 1509 to about 1640.

**Q.** What constitutes the difference of these styles, or orders ?

**A.** The difference in them depends chiefly in the form of the arches, which are round, pointed, and mixed ; the size of the windows, and the manner in which they are subdivided by transoms, mullions, and tracery ; and in certain ornaments and mouldings peculiar to each style, and which are seldom to be met with in any other.

**Q.** Are the majority of our ecclesiastical buildings composed only of one style ?

**A.** Most of our cathedral and country churches have either been built, or had additions made to them, at different periods, and seldom exhibit an uniformity of design : many of them have details about them of almost every style.





## CHAPTER II.

### OF THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF ARCHES.

**Q.** Since one of the principal distinctions of the styles as they differ from each other, consists in the form of the arches, how are they divided generally?

**A.** Into three distinct sorts, namely, the Round, the Pointed, and the Mixed; each of these are again subdivided.

**Q.** What different kinds of Round Arches are there?

**A.** Two, the Semicircular Arch, and the Segmental arch.

**Q.** How are they formed or described?

**A.** The semi-circular arch has its centre in

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the same line with its spring, (fig. 1.) and the segmental arch has its centre lower than its spring. (fig. 2.)



**Q.** During what period of time were the semi-circular and segmental arches in use?

**A.** From the time of the Romans, and establishment of Christianity, to the early part of the reign of Henry the Third.

**Q.** What are the different kinds of pointed arches?

**A.** The Lancet, the Equilateral, the Drop, and the Horseshoe Arch.

**Q.** How is the Lancet Arch formed and described?

**A.** It is formed of two segments of a circle, and its centres have a radius or line longer

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than the breadth of the arch, and may be described from an acute angled triangle. (fig. 3.)

**Q.** How is the Equilateral Arch formed and described ?

**A.** From two segments of a circle, the centres of it have a radius or line equal to the breath of the arch, and it may be described from an equilateral triangle, (fig. 4.)

**Q.** How is the Drop Arch formed and described ?

**A.** Like the foregoing it is formed from two segments of a circle, and the centres of it have a radius shorter than the breadth of the arch ; it may be described from an obtuse angled triangle. (fig. 5.)



**Q.** How is the Horseshoe Arch formed and described ?

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A. It is formed of two segments of a circle, and is described from two centres or points, both of which are above its spring. (fig. 6.) This arch was seldom used.



Q. During what period were these pointed arches in use?

A. They were all gradually introduced between the reigns of Henry the First and Henry the Third, and continued during the reigns of Henry the Third and Edward the First, when the horseshoe and lancet arch appear to have been generally discarded, though the other two prevailed till a much later period.

Q. How are mixed arches divided?

A. Into two kinds; namely, the ogee arch, and the Tudor arch.

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**Q.** How is the ogee arch formed and described?

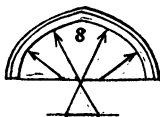
**A.** It is formed of four segments of a circle, and is described from four centres—two on a level with the spring, and two above reversed. (fig. 7.)

**Q.** When was the ogee arch introduced? and how long did it prevail?

**A.** It was introduced in the reign of Edward the Third, and continued till the reign of Henry the Seventh.

**Q.** How is the tudor arch described?

**A.** Like the ogee, from four centres—two on a level with the spring, and two at a distance from it, and below. (fig. 8.)



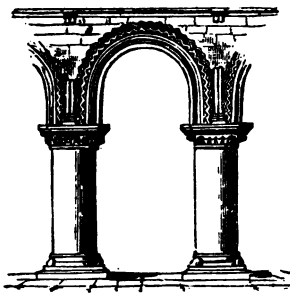
## ARCHITECTURE.

**Q.** When was the Tudor arch introduced?  
and why is it so called?

**A.** It was introduced about the reign of Henry the Sixth, or perhaps earlier, but became most prevalent during the reigns of Henry the Seventh and Henry the Eighth, under the Tudor dynasty, from which it derives its name.



**Piscina, from Bilton Church, Warwickshire.**  
See chap. X.



Norman Arch, from Melbourn Church, Derbyshire.

### CHAPTER III.

#### OF THE SAXON\* AND NORMAN STYLES.

**Q.** DURING what period of time did this style prevail?

**A.** From the establishment of Christianity till the reign of Stephen, about the year 1135.

**Q.** By what means are we to distinguish this style from those of a later period?

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\* The difference between the Saxon and Norman styles has been before alluded to. So few Saxon buildings, really distinguishable as such, now remain, and the difference between the later churches of that style and the early Norman churches is so imperceptible, that they are here both classed as one style.

## ARCHITECTURE.

A. It is easily distinguished by its semi-circular and segmental arches ; its massive piers, which are generally round, though sometimes square and multangular ; and from the numerous ornaments and mouldings peculiar to this style.

Q. What part of the original building has generally been preserved, in those churches that were built by the Saxons, or Normans, when all the rest has been demolished, and rebuilt in a later style of architecture ?

A. There appears to have been a prevalent custom among those architects who succeeded the Normans, to preserve the doors of those churches, which, being in a ruinous state, they rebuilt ; for many such doors still remain in churches, the other portions of which were built at a much later period.

Q. Were the Norman doors much ornamented ?

A. In many instances ; the arch being semi-circular, the depth of it was increased by bands



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of mouldings, which were often profusely decorated with the ornaments peculiar to this style, of which the chevron, or zigzag, appears to have been the most general. The entrance to the Temple Church, London; the Abbey Gate, Bristol; the West Entrance to Lincoln Cathedral, and a doorway in the cloisters of Durham Cathedral, are exceeding rich examples of this kind.—In small country churches the round-headed doors were frequently quite plain.

Q. In what other respect were these doors sometimes ornamented?

A. The tympanum, or circular head of the arch, is often filled up with rude sculpture, in basso relievo. Instances where this occurs may be seen in the Priors' Entrance Door, Ely Cathedral; and the West Door, Rochester Cathedral.

Q. What kind of windows were there belonging to this style?

A. The windows were very small, long, and narrow, seldom of more than one light,

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with semicircular heads, sometimes ornamented with the chevron or zigzag, but frequently quite plain.

Q. What kind of piers were the Saxon and Norman ?

A. Very massive, and the generality round, though sometimes they were square, hexagonal, and octagonal ; and frequently they were ornamented with spiral bands and mouldings.

Q. How are the capitals distinguished ?

A. They are mostly square or round, and extremely dissimilar in design and ornament to each other, and are often decorated with the zigzag and other mouldings : they also sometimes exhibit rude imitations of the Corinthian and Ionic capitals.

Q. How are the arches distinguished ?

A. By their semicircular form. They are sometimes enriched with mouldings, but most frequently plain.



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**Q.** Were there any buttresses used at this period?

**A.** Very seldom; the walls were enormously thick, and required no additional support: the few in use are like pilasters, with a broad face projecting very little from the building. This kind of buttress was also used in the next or Semi-Norman style.

**Q.** Were there any towers?

**A.** Yes; they were short and massive; sometimes plain, but often decorated on the outside with semicircular arches, which frequently intersected each other; and this intersection is by some supposed to have suggested the first idea of the pointed arch.

**Q.** Do pinnacles appear to have been known to the Normans?

**A.** Although some are of opinion that the pinnacle was not introduced till after the adoption of the pointed style, many Norman buildings have pinnacles of a conical

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shape, which are apparently part of the original design.

Q. Is there any distinction between the earlier buildings of this style, and those of a later date?

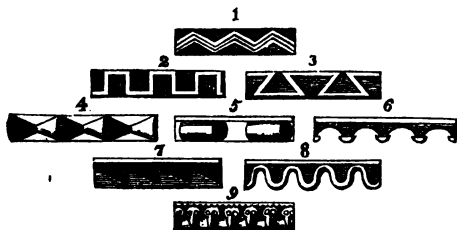
A. Many of the early churches appear to have consisted of a single story only, and were in general very small; the latter frequently consisting of three tiers or stories, the lowest of which contained only single arches unconnected with each other: above each of these, in the second tier, were two smaller equal arches together under a larger, with a column between them; and above these, in the third tier, were rows of three arches connected together, the middle one of which was higher and broader than the others, all the three occupying a space equal to the span of the lowest arch. It was in this manner that the later architects of this style, when they carried up their work to the height of three stories, ornamented the upper ones, to avoid the nakedness of plain walls.

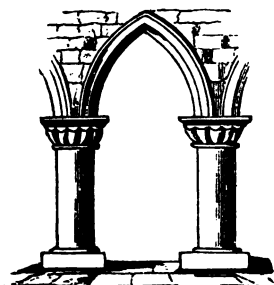
Q. What were the ornaments principally

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made use of by the Saxons and Normans, in the decoration of their ecclesiastical buildings?

A. The chevron, or zigzag, (fig. 1.); the embattled fret, (fig. 2.); the triangular fret, (fig. 3.); the nail-head, (fig. 4.); the billet, (fig. 5.); the corbel bole, (fig. 6.) the hatched, (fig. 7.); the nebule, (fig. 8.); the beak-head, (fig. 9.); together with many others; though these were the ones chiefly used.





Semi-Norman Pointed Arch.

## CHAPTER IV.

### OF THE SEMI-NORMAN STYLE.

**Q.** WHAT is the Semi-Norman style?

**A.** It is that style of building which prevailed from the reign of Stephen to the reign of Henry the Third, during which period the pointed style of architecture was by slow degrees attaining maturity.

**Q.** What is the great peculiarity in this style?

**A.** The intermixture of the pointed arch with the semicircular or segmental arch.

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**Q.** Whence are we to derive the origin of the pointed arch?

**A.** No question has been combated with more spirit of inquiry and difference of opinion than this. Some attempt to derive it from the Saracens, and assert that it was introduced into this country by the Crusaders; and others maintain, that it was suggested by the intersection of semicircular arches, which intersection produced the pointed arch.

**Q.** What are the characteristics of this style?

**A.** In large buildings, massive piers of the Norman style support pointed arches, above which are frequently round-headed windows, or semicircular arches; and the pointed arch of this style is often, though not always, enriched with the zigzag and other Norman ornaments, peculiar only to this and the Norman style, and which are not to be found in buildings of a later period.

**Q.** How long did the Semi-Norman continue?

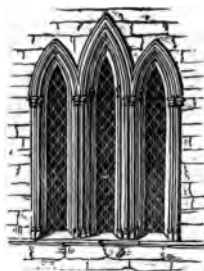
#### ARCHITECTURE.

A. For nearly a century : before the round arch was entirely disused, and the pointed kind of architecture completely established.

Q. What are the chief specimens of this style?

A. The church of St. Cross, near Winchester, which in its different parts presents an almost imperceptible gradation from the Norman to the Early English style ; and the Temple Church, London, which seems to belong to one style as much as to the other. We may also enumerate the ruins of Buildwas Abbey, Salop ; Fountains, Rievaulx, and Roche Abbeys, Yorkshire ; which, together with many other monastic remains, and churches erected in the twelfth century, exhibit an intermixture of the Norman and Early English styles.





Early English Lancet Windows, from Beverley Minster.

## CHAPTER V.

### OF THE EARLY ENGLISH STYLE.

**Q. DURING what period did the Early English style prevail?**

**A. From about 1220 to about the year 1300.**

**Q. How is it distinguished from the Norman and Semi-Norman.**

**A. The round arch was entirely discarded, and the pointed arch only used.**

**Q. Of what four kinds were the pointed arches of this era?**

## ARCHITECTURE.

A. The lancet, the horseshoe, the equilateral, and the drop arch.

Q. Which of these arches were most in use ?

A. In large buildings, the lancet and the equilateral shaped arch were prevalent, as appears in Westminster Abbey, where the lancet arch predominates, and Salisbury Cathedral, where the equilateral arch is principally used ; but in small country churches the drop arch is most frequently found. All these arches are struck from two centres, and are formed from segments of a circle. The horseshoe arch of this era was, as we have before observed, seldom used.

Q. What was the difference of the piers between this and an earlier era ?

A. Instead of the massive Norman, the Early English piers were in large buildings composed of slender pillars of marble, surrounded with shafts, generally arranged in a circle, and uniting together under one capital. They are further distinguished by the almost constant division by

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one or more bands of the shafts which surround them. In small country churches plain multangular (generally octagonal) piers, with plain capitals, were in use even at a later period.

Q. How are the capitals distinguished?

A. In general they are plain and unornamented, consisting of a bell with a moulding under it, and a capping with more mouldings above. These mouldings are, in large buildings, often continued round the centre pier, so as to form a general capital; sometimes a richer capital, with leaves, is used. In small churches the capital is very plain, consisting only of a few simple mouldings.

Q. How are the doors of this style distinguished?

A. Large doors of this style are often double, and are divided by a shaft, either single or clustered, with a quatrefoil, or other ornament, over it: examples may be observed at Ely, Chichester, and Lincoln Cathedrals, and at Christchurch, Hants. Small doors of this style have

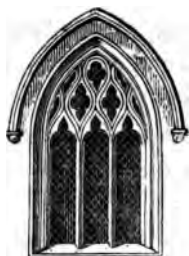
## ARCHITECTURE.

generally a dripstone over them, supported by heads; sometimes the doors are trefoil or cinquefoil headed; the shafts attached to them are generally round, and have a variety of capitals, some plain, but many with leaves curling round the bell moulding.

Q. What kind of windows were prevalent?

A. In the early part of this style, the lancet arch headed window, very long and narrow, was most prevalent, frequently two, three, or more of these were connected together by dripstones, the middle one longer and higher than those at the sides; sometimes they were unconnected and without dripstones; at a later period a broader window divided by one plain mullion, and finished at the top with a lozenge, trefoil, circle, or other simple ornament, was used; and sometimes a window divided into three lights, the middle one higher than the others, and comprized under one dripstone, was in use.

Q. What difference was there between the towers of this era, and the Norman towers?



Decorated English Window, from Bilton Church, Warwickshire.

## CHAPTER VI.

### OF THE DECORATED ENGLISH STYLE.

**Q. WHEN** did the Decorated English style commence, and how long did it continue?

**A.** It commenced about 1300, and continued to about the year 1380 or 1390.

**Q.** Whence does it derive its appellation?

**A.** From there being a greater redundancy of chaste ornament in this than in any other style, though not so multiplied as the Florid, or Perpendicular style; and with propriety it is

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considered as the most beautiful style of English ecclesiastical architecture.

**Q.** What difference is there between the arches of this style, and those of an earlier period?

**A.** The lancet arch is seldom seen ; the equilateral arch is generally, though not always, used. Both this and the drop arch are, taken exclusively, difficult to be distinguished from those of an earlier period.

**Q.** What difference is there in the piers?

**A.** In large buildings piers of this style were formed of small pillars or shafts, not detached from the body of the column, but made part of it, being closely united : they were in general arranged diamond shape, and without bands. In small churches the multangular pier, similar to the Early English, is very prevalent ; and in some cases a pier composed of four small pillars or shafts, closely connected, in the shape of a lozenge. The mouldings of the capitals are also more numerous than before.

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**Q.** In what respect do the doors of this style differ?

**A.** Large doors of this style are very similar to those of the Early English, having shafts, though the ornaments are different, and are sometimes double, of which a specimen may be seen in the entrance to the Chapter House, York Cathedral. Small doors of this style are generally without shafts, and the architrave mouldings run down the side, and almost to the ground, into the base tablet. The doors of this style are sometimes enriched with triangular and ogee canopies, ornamented with crockets and finials. The north door of Exeter Cathedral may be cited as an example of this kind.

**Q.** How are the windows of this style known?

**A.** The windows of this style are easier to be distinguished than any other part. They are in general large and wide, divided by mullions into two or more lights, which mullions branch out into various ramifications and flowing tracery at the heads of the windows, forming trefoils, quatrefoils, circles, and other figures, but do

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not run in perpendicular lines through the head. The variety of tracery in windows of this style is very great, and they frequently have triangular and ogee canopies over them, ornamented in the same manner as those over doors; examples of this kind may be found at York Cathedral. In the south transept of Chichester and west front of Exeter Cathedrals are two exceeding large and beautiful windows of this style.

Q. What other peculiarities are there appertaining to this style?

A. The buttresses were worked in stages, and their set-offs have frequently triangular heads, decorated with crockets and finials. The niches of this style are very beautiful, and have triangular and ogee canopies, enriched with finials and crockets. The whole of this style, from its chasteness and beauty, is unequalled by any of a preceding or subsequent age.

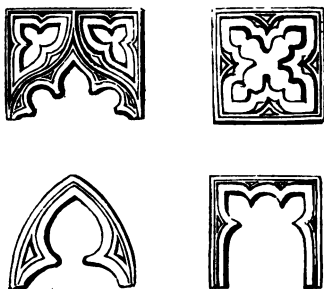
Q. Was the transition from this style to the next, gradual?

A. Both the transition from the Early Eng-



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lish to the Decorated style, and from the Decorated to the Florid or Perpendicular, were so gradual, that though many individual details and ornaments were extremely dissimilar, and peculiar only to each style, we are only able to judge from examples, when a change was generally established.



Specimens of Panelling. See Chap. VII.



Perpendicular Door, from Canterbury Cathedral.

## CHAPTER VII.

### OF THE FLORID OR PERPENDICULAR STYLE.

Q. How long did this style prevail?

A. From about 1380 or 1390 to about the year 1509.

Q. Whence does it derive its appellations?

A. From the multiplicity, profusion, and exquisite minuteness of the ornaments, it has by some received the designation of *Florid*; by others, from the mullions of the windows and ornamental panels running in perpendicular lines up to the head, which is not the case in any

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earlier style, it has been called *The Perpendicular*.

Q. Of what kind are the arches of this style?

A. Although in this style pointed arches of almost every description are to be found, yet the four-centred, commonly called the Tudor arch, was mostly used; and by that alone this style is easily recognized.

Q. How are the piers of this style distinguished?

A. In small country churches the mouldings frequently run from the base of the pier all round the arch, without any capital. This distinction also occurs in large buildings of this style, and sometimes the interior mouldings only of the architrave are stopped by a capital, while the exterior have none.

Q. What is the distinction in doors of this style?

A. They may be easily known by the square

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head which is almost constantly used over the arch, the spandrels of which are generally filled with some ornament; or where this is not the case, by the four-centred arch. Some doors of this style have ogee canopies over them, as at Gloucester Cathedral, and King's College Chapel, Cambridge.

Q. How are the windows distinguished?

A. They are generally large, and are easily known by the mullions running in perpendicular lines up to the head, and also by transoms, which are general in this style, crossing them horizontally; the heads of the windows have frequently slender mullions running from the heads of the lights between each principal mullion; and these have small transoms, until the window is divided into a series of small panels, and the heads being arched are cinquefoiled, or trefoiled; the arches of the windows vary from an acute-pointed to an obtuse and almost flat arch: they have frequently a dripstone over them, though not always. Early windows of this style have also ogee canopies.

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Q. What may be noticed in the battlements of this era?

A. They are frequently panelled or open-worked, and ornamented with quatrefoils or small trefoil-headed arches; and they have sometimes triangular heads, as at King's College Chapel, Cambridge; we also often find straight-sided parapets, pierced with quatrefoils.

Q. What peculiarities belong to this style?

A. The soffit or interior sweep of the arches of doors and windows are often divided into compartments, and decorated with a series of small panels, having foliated-arched heads. The frequent use of panelling, both on the interior and exterior walls of rich buildings, is very striking, and the groined roofs of fan-tracery so beautifully exemplified in King's College Chapel, Cambridge, Henry the Seventh's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, and in many other rich buildings of the same style, are not observable at an earlier period.

Q. What else is there worthy of remark?

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A. Besides the frequent use of panelling, which in many churches cover the walls from the clerestory windows down to the exterior mouldings of the arches below, several churches of this style have long ranges of clerestory windows frequently consisting of twelve or more, so close to each other that the whole length of the wall seems perforated: we may enumerate as examples, the churches of St. Michael's, Coventry; Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire; Lavenham, and Melford, Suffolk.

Q. What particular ornaments does this style possess?

A. The rose, and a flower of four leaves denominated the Tudor flower, which last we frequently find used as a cornice to tombs of rich and elaborate workmanship; the portcullis and angels, with which some buildings of this style are profusely decorated, were the badges of Henry the Seventh.

Q. What do we find latterly in large buildings of this style?



Debased English Window, from Ladbrook Church, Warwickshire.  
1616.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### OF THE DEBASED ENGLISH STYLE.

**Q.** When did this style commence?

**A.** In the reign of Henry the Eighth, and it continued till about 1640.

**Q.** Why is it so called?

**A.** From the utter destitution of almost every real principle of the art, and the omission of every beauty.

**Q.** What was the occasion of this falling off?

**A.** In the early part of the reign of Henry the Eighth, few ecclesiastical buildings were con-

## ARCHITECTURE.

structed, and afterwards the Reformation and suppression of the religious houses and monasteries, discouraged the prevalent style of architecture, and gave the most fatal blow to the spirit of erecting and enriching churches this country ever felt.

**Q.** How could this be the cause?

**A.** The expenses of erecting many of our ecclesiastical buildings, in the most costly, beautiful, and correct styles, were defrayed out of the immense revenues of the monasteries, which, at their suppression, were granted away by the Crown.

**Q.** What were the characteristics of this style?

**A.** Low heavy towers, and square-headed windows with perpendicular mullions, may be found in almost every country church, which has been repaired or partly rebuilt since the Reformation, and during the period this style predominated.



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**Q. What change took place at the latter end of the era during which this style prevailed ?**

**A. A mixture of Italian and English architecture formed the prevailing mode of building; and about the reign of Charles the First every principle of our ancient ecclesiastical method of building was entirely superseded, and lost sight of.**

**Q. What specimens are there of this style ?**

**A. Besides numberless specimens which may be found in many of our country churches, of the square-headed window and low heavy towers, many of the Colleges and public buildings, both at Oxford and Cambridge, built during this period, present an indiscriminate mixture of the Italian and Debased Gothic styles.**



A Norman Crypt.

## CHAPTER IX.

### OF THE PRINCIPAL PARTS OF A CHURCH.

**Q.** How is a church generally divided ?

**A.** Into a tower or steeple, nave, chancel or choir, and aisles. Some large churches, and all cathedrals, are built in the form of a cross, and in these the part running north and south, is called the cross or transept; cathedrals and large churches have also frequently chapels attached to them. Small churches have often a nave and chancel only.

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**Q.** What part of the church is called the nave ?

**A.** The part westward of the chancel or choir, and within the piers.

**Q.** What parts of the church are aisles ?

**A.** The divisions or spaces, north and south, outward of the piers;—these seldom extend eastward of the nave.

**Q.** What is the chancel, or choir ?

**A.** The eastern space about the altar, in collegiate and cathedral churches is called the choir; in churches not collegiate, it is called the chancel.

**Q.** What is a steeple ?

**A.** Any building higher than the roof of a church; it has frequently a spire attached to it, and in it the church bells are hung; it is in general situated westward of the nave, and rest of the church, though in cross churches it is commonly erected at the intersection.

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**Q.** Were the towers of country churches ever appropriated to any particular use?

**A.** They were used occasionally as parochial fortresses, to which the inhabitants retired in time of danger. The tower of Rugby Church, Warwickshire, appears to have been erected for this purpose; it is of a square form, very lofty, and without a single buttress to support it; the lower windows are very narrow, and at a great distance from the ground; the only entrance was through the church. It has also a fireplace, and altogether seems well calculated to resist a sudden attack.

**Q.** To what purpose do spires appear to have been applied?

**A.** They appear in many instances to have served as landmarks to guide travellers through woods and over barren downs. The spire of Astley Church, Warwickshire, was so perspicuous an object at a distance, that it was denominated the lantern of Arden. The spires of Monkskirby and Clifton, in the same county, were also noticed as eminent landmarks.

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**Q.** What is a crypt?

**A.** A vaulted subterraneous apartment, or chapel, which is sometimes found beneath ancient churches.

**Q.** What are porches?

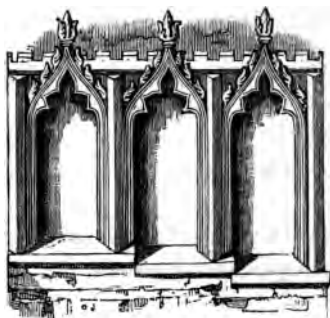
**A.** Small buildings or projections over the doors of churches : these have sometimes, though seldom, small rooms over them.

**Q.** What is called the clerestory?

**A.** The top of the middle aisle, with windows above the arches.



**A Norman Buttress.**



Sedilia, or Stone Seats, in Crick Church, Northamptonshire.

## CHAPTER X.

### OF THE SUBORDINATE PARTS OF A CHURCH.

**Q, WHAT** are buttresses ?

**A.** Masses of masonry projecting from the external surface of the building, erected generally at the corners, and between the windows, for the purpose of strengthening and supporting the walls; the mouldings and slopes, which divide them into stages, are called *set-offs*.

**Q.** What is a canopy and dripstone ?

**A.** The tablet or moulding which runs round and over the heads of doors and windows, if

## **ARCHITECTURE.**

plain, is called a dripstone, if ornamented with crockets or otherwise, a canopy.

**Q. What are crockets ?**

**A. Small bunches of foliage ornamenting the sides of canopies and pinnacles.**

**Q. What are finials ?**

**A. Bunches of foliage terminating spires, canopies and pinnacles.**

**Q. What is a corbel ?**

**A. An ornamental projection from the wall, to support an arch, niche, dripstone, or canopy ; and it is often a head or part of a figure.**

**Q. What are niches ?**

**A. Small arches, mostly sunk in the wall, and frequently containing statues ; they have often a projecting bracket at the base, small buttresses and pinnacles at the sides, and flat or projecting canopies at top, which are often richly ornamented.** 60

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**Q. What are mullions ?**

**A. The upright or perpendicular divisions of windows into lights.**

**Q. What are transoms ?**

**A. The horizontal divisions of windows and panelling.**

**Q. What is tracery ?**

**A. Tracery is a general term used for the ornamental parts of screens, heads of windows, and panelling, being that part of the composition where the mouldings divide the space into quatrefoils, cinquefoils, trefoils, and other ornaments.**

**Q. What are clerestory windows ?**

**A. A range of windows placed near the top, and constructed in the main body, of the building.**

**Q. What are triforia ?**

**A. Upper ways or galleries round cathe-**



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drals and large churches, from which tapestry and other ornaments were formerly suspended on festivals.

**Q. What is a pinnacle?**

**A.** A small spire, generally with four sides, and ornamented; they are usually placed on the top of buttresses, and at the corners of a tower.

**Q. What is a piscina?**

**A.** A hollow and perforated basin of stone, placed in a small niche cut in the substance of the south wall of the chancel; in it the priest emptied the water in which he washed his hands, and also that in which the chalice had been rinsed: all consecrated waste stuff was also dismissed through the same channel. Piscinas are sometimes double.

**Q. What is a stoup.**

**A.** A small niche near the entrance door, with a basin which held in Catholic times the holy water.

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**Q. What is a font ?**

**A.** The vase or basin at which persons are baptized. Anciently fonts were made capacious enough for the immersion of infants, which practice continued till the Reformation.

**Q. What is a locker ?**

**A.** A small niche found in some churches near the altar, generally of a square form, and unornamented, within which the chalice and other sacred vessels used at the altar were formerly placed.

**Q. What are piers ?**

**A.** The columns or pillars in the interior, which support the arches.

**Q. What was a roodloft ?**

**A.** A gallery which used to extend across the nave, at the entrance of the chancel or choir, where a crucifix or rood, and other images, were anciently placed. At the Reformation roods

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were taken down by an order of government, and at the same time the royal arms were substituted in their place. This gallery was ascended by a stone staircase in the wall winding round a newell or centre column, and was commonly supported by a cross-beam, richly carved, underneath which a screen of beautiful open tabernacle work separated the chancel from the nave; this screen still remains in many churches, although the roodloft has been destroyed.

Q. What are stalls?

A. The seats for the dean, canons, and other dignitaries, in the choirs of collegiate churches. The bishop's seat in a cathedral is called the throne.

Q. What are sedilia?

A. Stone seats found in the south walls of the chancel of many churches; they are generally much ornamented, and vary in number from one to five. To these the priest and his attendant ministers retired during the performance of mass, while part of the service was chaunted by the choristers.



Norman Capitals.

## CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

### ON THE INTERNAL ARRANGEMENT AND DECORATIONS OF A CHURCH.

THE interior of a church in the middle ages presented a very different appearance to what it did subsequent to the Reformation; at which period a total change taking place in its ritual, a correspondent change took place also with regard to its internal arrangement.

On entering a church through the porch on the north or south side, we sometimes perceive on the right of the door, at a convenient height from the ground, beneath a niche, and partly projecting from the wall, a stone basin: this was the *stoup*, or receptacle for holy water, into which each catholic dipped his finger and

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crossed himself, when passing the threshold of the sacred edifice.

The porch was an ancient appendage to a church, and used for a variety of purposes, both civil and religious : here the parishioners met to settle disputes, and here also parts of the services of baptism and marriage were performed.

Having entered the church, the font is generally discovered near the west end of the south aisle, and not far from the south door ; this was for the convenience of baptism ; part of the service having been performed in the porch, the infant was brought to the font, and immersed therein thrice, in the names of the three persons of the Holy Trinity. By an ancient ecclesiastical constitution, a font was required to be placed in every church where baptism might be performed ; and it was to be capacious enough for total immersion.

Fonts are to be met with of very ancient forms ; and their styles may be ascertained by the architectural decorations with which they commonly abound.

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On proceeding down the nave or middle aisle, which before the Reformation was entirely devoid of pewing, and used chiefly for the gorgeous processions of the priesthood of the Romish Church, we approach the chancel or choir, separated from the nave by a beautiful and highly decorated screen of open work; above this was a cross beam, richly carved, supporting a gallery, the passage to which was up a flight of stone steps in the north or south wall immediately adjoining. This was the roodloft, where the crucifix or rood, together with images of such saints as were most esteemed by the parishioners, were placed: here also, in some churches, was the organ, and seats for the musicians.

Outside the roof, between the chancel and nave, the sancte bell was often suspended; this was rung when the priest pronounced that solemn part of the service, *Sancte, Sancte, Sancte, Dominus Deus Sabaoth*; that all who were unable to be present at the church, might on hearing the sound of it, fall on their knees in reverence of the Host then elevated; and the bell was thus placed, that being near the

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altar it might be the more readily rung out as soon as the priest came to the sacred words.

The chancel comes next: this was so called from the screen or lattice work, (*cancelli*) by which it was separated from the anterior part of the church. On entering it from the nave, stalls are sometimes perceived on either side, with desks before them; these were often elaborately carved, and appropriated to the use of the choir.

Proceeding up the chancel, we ascend three steps, on which the high altar formerly stood, in the place now occupied by the communion table; this was so called to distinguish it from all other altars in the same church.

Near the high altar we frequently find in the south wall of the chancel, a series of stone seats or recesses, beneath enriched arched canopies, supported and divided from each other by slender pillars or buttresses; these vary in number from one to five, but generally consist of three, and are the *sedilia*, or seats anciently appropriated to the use of the officiating priest

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and his attendant ministers, the deacon and sub-deacon, who retired thither during a portion of the mass, which was chaunted by the choir; that seat nearest the altar being generally higher than the others, was occupied by the priest, he being of superior rank in the church to the deacon and sub-deacon.

Eastward of the last-mentioned seats is a small niche or recess in the same wall; this contains a hollow perforated basin of stone, called a *piscina*, into which it appears that after the priest had washed his hands, which he was accustomed to do during the service, the water was poured, as also the remains of the consecrated elements.

The *piscina* is very common in churches where the sedilia or stone seats are wanting; and not only in the chancel, but also in the south walls, at the east end of the north and south aisles, as will be presently noticed: it appears in short to have been an indispensable appendage to an altar.

We also find within the east or north wall



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of the chancel, a small square recess, generally unornamented ; this was the *locker*, and is supposed to have contained the chalice, paten, and other utensils necessary for the celebration of mass.

Over the high altar was the great east window of the church, filled with painted glass, whereon a variety of devices and representations of crowned heads, prelates and saints, the latter of whom may be distinguished by their peculiar symbols, were depicted. Other windows were also filled with painted glass, and contained the arms of different benefactors to the church.

The pavement, beneath the high altar, was frequently composed of small square bricks or tiles, whereon the arms of founders and benefactors, interspersed with flowers and other devices, were painted and glazed.

The walls of the church were sometimes painted with representations of the day of judgment, legendary stories, figures of saints, and scriptural sentences ; these have, in most

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churches, been washed over and destroyed, so that now few specimens remain.

On returning through the chancel and nave into the aisles, we often find in the south wall, near the east end, the same kind of niche and piscina before described as being in the chancel ; this is a plain indication that an altar has been erected in this part of the church, endowed for a chantry priest ; and this part of the aisle was often separated from the rest of the church by a screen, similar to that between the chancel and nave, and thus was formed into a private chapel or chantry.

It was the custom in ancient times for lords of manors, and persons of great wealth and importance, to build small chapels or side-aisles to their parish churches, and these were endowed with lands sufficient for the maintenance of one or more priests, who were to sing masses at the altar erected therein to some favourite saint, for the souls of the founder, and those of his ancestors and posterity ; and these chantry chapels served also as a burial-place for the founder and his family.

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The sedilia, or altar seats, so frequently found in the south wall of the chancel, are sometimes, though rarely, to be met with in the south walls of side-aisles, or chantry chapels; when this is the case, it is presumed the endowment was for the maintenance of more priests than one.

The general situation of the steeple, or tower, is at the west end of the nave, though in cross churches it was erected at the intersection of the transept, between the nave and chancel: here the bells were hung, without which no church was accounted complete; they were anciently baptized with great ceremony, held in high estimation, and peculiar virtues were ascribed to them.

Soon after the dissolution of the monasteries, chantries were abolished, and the revenues with which they were endowed, together with the ornaments, jewelry, and plate, pertaining to each particular altar, seized for the use of the king.

The rood and other images were also ordered to be taken down from the roodloft; and that

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gallery being rendered useless, on account of other innovations, was in most cases demolished, and the steps leading to it blocked up, though the entrance may be frequently perceived.

The fine open-worked screen beneath the roodloft, has been preserved in numerous instances, and also the stone seats in the chancel, the piscina, and locker, though these are found sometimes much mutilated.

All altars, which in accordance with certain ecclesiastical constitutions, were obliged necessarily to be of stone, were either at this period, or during the civil wars in the seventeenth century, so effectually destroyed, that not a single one is now thought to exist. The high altar was succeeded by the communion table.

Pews were not used as a general accommodation till after the Reformation, when the present pulpit and reading desk became general also.

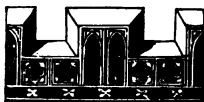
Many fonts have been removed from their original situation in the south aisle, to a spot

#### ARCHITECTURE.

more convenient for the performance of the baptismal rite: the whole of that service being now performed in the church, and not part in the porch, which was anciently the case.

The sancte bell remains but in few churches.

The destruction of the fine painted glass, with which most church windows were adorned, was occasioned by the fanatical zeal of the Puritans in the seventeenth century, who possessing neither feelings of veneration, or even of common respect, scrupled not to pollute and profane our sacred edifices; and more devastation was by them then committed than at any period since the Reformation.



An embattled Parapet, panelled.



A Finial and Crockets.

GLOSSARY  
OF  
ARCHITECTURAL TERMS.

*Abacus*—The upper part of a pier or pillar, which serves as a covering to the capital.

*Altar*—A table or erection of stone, at which the celebration of mass took place. Soon after the Reformation many altars were taken down, and their place supplied by the communion table; and during the civil wars of the seventeenth century, the puritanical party destroyed all the altars which the agents of the Reformation had spared.

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*Apsis*—The circular part at the east end of ancient churches.

*Arch*—Part of a circle or ellipsis.

*Archivolt*—Mouldings round an arch, extending from capital to capital.

*Bands*—Small strings round shafts, running either horizontally or in a spiral direction.

*Base Mouldings* — Projecting mouldings, placed just above the foundation walls of churches; they sometimes consist of a mere slope with a plain face underneath, and often of several sets of mouldings, each projecting farther than the one above it.

*Basso relievo* — Sculptured work projecting from a plane or flat surface.

*Battlement*—An indented parapet wall which crowns the top of a church; it is either plain, panelled, or pierced.

*Boss*—An ornament placed at the intersection of the ribs in groined ceilings; it is often decorated with armorial badges and sculptured devices.

*Bracket*—A projection from a wall, of wood or stone, frequently serving as a support to a statue placed in a niche.

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*Capital*—The crown or head of a pillar placed immediately over the shaft, and usually ornamented.

*Cinquefoil*—An ornament, foliation, or tracery, representing five leaves of a flower.

*Coping of a wall*—The uppermost stones cut sloping to throw off the rain.

*Cornice*—The moulding or tablet underneath the battlement or parapet of any building.

*Creepers*—Leaves carved on the outward angles of canopies and pinnacles.

*Groining*—Vaulted arches intersecting one another, which intersections are crossed by ribs.

*Herring-bone work*—By this term is understood courses of stone laid angularly, or a row of bricks set obliquely from the right to the left, succeeded by an oblique row from the left to the right.

*Impost*—The abacus which crowns a pier, and from which an arch springs.

*Mouldings*—Ornamental parts of a building which project beyond the perpendicular surface of a wall, pier, &c.

*Newell*—The circular column round which steps wind.



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*Ogee*—A moulding consisting of a round and hollow ; also the name of an arch.

*Parapet*—A straight or embattled wall on the top of any building.

*Pediment*—The lofty triangular figure in the front of a building, and over doors and windows.

*Pilaster*—A flat pillar or pier placed against a wall.

*Quatrefoil*—An ornament or tracery representing four leaves of a flower.

*Ribs*—The mouldings forming the groining of the roof.

*Screen*—A latticed division, composed of wood or stone richly carved, separating different parts of a church, as the chancel from the nave, chantry and other chapels from the aisles and body of the church.

*Set-offs*—The sloped mouldings which divide buttresses into stages.

*Shaft*—The body of a pier or pillar ; that part between the base and capital.

*Soffit*—The interior sweep or ceiling of an arch.

*Spandrils*—The triangular spaces included between an arch and a square formed on

## ARCHITECTURE.

the outside of it; they are often ornamented with flowers and armorial bearings.

*Stages*—The perpendicular division of buttresses.

*Trefoil*—An ornamental part, or tracery, representing three leaves of a flower.

*Tympanum*—The flat surface or space within a triangular or circular pediment.



A Niche, Early English style.

THE END.

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